

Pesticide Application Requirements Related to Bee Protection

1. Before applying any pesticide to a flowering plant, read the label to determine, “Is it toxic to bees?”
2. If yes, contact our office at (800) 200-2337 to determine, “Has any beekeeper requested notification?”
3. If yes, notify the beekeeper, at least 48 hours in advance of the application, with the following:
 - a) time and place the application is to be made,
 - b) crop and acreage to be treated,
 - c) method of application,
 - d) identity and dosage rate of the pesticide to be applied, and
 - e) how the person performing pest control may be contacted by the beekeeper.

The following regulations further clarify these requirements. They are found in the **California Code of Regulations, Title 3**. Food and Agriculture, Division 6. Pesticides and Pest Control Operations, Chapter 3. Pest Control Operations, Subchapter 2. Work Requirements, Article 3. Protection of Bees.

§ 6650. Pesticides Toxic to Bees.

- (a) Pesticides toxic to bees are those that include the words “toxic to bees” on the labeling of the pesticide, regardless of modifying words on the label that state “highly” or “moderately.”
- (b) Bees are considered to be inactive from one hour after sunset to two hours before sunrise or when the temperature is below 55 degrees Fahrenheit. The sunset and sunrise times will be those indicated in the local newspaper.
- (c) Residual toxicity (RT) time is that period of time after completing a pesticide application until there is minimal toxic effect to bees. The RT time is specified on product labeling and is based upon Residual Toxicity ²⁵ (RT ²⁵) studies. RT ²⁵ studies determine 25 percent bee mortality based on the test bee population exposed to the formulated pesticide product applied to foliage.

§ 6652. Availability for Notification.

- (a) Each beekeeper who desires advance notice of applications of pesticides shall inform the commissioner of a two-hour period between 6 a.m. and 8 p.m. each day, during which time the beekeeper shall be available for contact, at the beekeeper's expense, to receive advance notice from persons intending to apply pesticide(s). This request for notification shall expire on December 31 of each year.
- (b) This section shall apply statewide. However, from March 15 through May 15 in a citrus/bee protection area, if there are conflicts between the provisions of this section and those of section 6656, section 6656 shall prevail.

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6654. Notification to Beekeepers.

(a) Each person intending to apply any pesticide toxic to bees to a blossoming plant shall, prior to the application, inquire of the commissioner, or of a notification service designated by the commissioner, whether any beekeeper with apiaries within one mile of the application site has requested notice of such application.

(b) If the person performing pest control is advised of a request for notification, he or she shall notify the beekeeper, at least 48 hours in advance of the application, of the time and place the application is to be made, the crop and acreage to be treated, the method of application, the identity and dosage rate of the pesticide to be applied and how the person performing pest control may be contacted by the beekeeper. This time may be increased or decreased by the commissioner, or by an agreement of both the beekeeper and the person performing the pest control work.

(c) This section shall apply statewide. However, from March 15 through May 15 in a citrus/bee protection area, if there are conflicts between the provisions of this section and those of section 6656, section 6656 shall prevail.